

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL EFL TEACHERS: VOICES FROM TEACHERS

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions on programs EFL teachers join to support their professional development and challenges faced by EFL teachers' in contribution to their professional development. To achieve these aims, a qualitative research in form of a case study was employed. The participants involved in this research were three English teachers. The participants were an experienced teacher in three of senior high schools in Garut. The data were collected using a semi-structured interview, additionally, document analysis as validate the data. The data were then analyzed based on the theory from Cresswell (2012). The result revealed that TPD was perceived positively by all the teachers. It can be inferred that the efforts of all participants have made similar efforts to improve their professionalism. These efforts comply with the Academic Qualifications and Teachers' Competence Standards, and include programs such as; seminars, workshops, training programs, and even modules/ books, Classroom Action Research and teaching materials. However, they also had problem improving their professional skills, because the challenges they faced are not only from external one, but also from internal factor.

Keywords: teacher professional development, the teachers' perceptions teacher professional development, the teachers' perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Translation does not only involve two different languages, but also two different cultures, EFL¹ teachers in Indonesia have to be professional in teaching. It is in line with Government Regulation No. 19/2005, teachers are required to be qualified based on four teacher competencies: personal competence, social competence, pedagogical competence, and professional competence. In addition, EFL teacher in Indonesia are facing challenge to be professional. Therefore, English teachers should have a good competence and skill because one factor contributes to the success of teaching and learning. However, this is ironic with reality.

Related to the problem above, one of the most direct ways to improve the quality of English teachers in Indonesia is to improve the quality of the teacher education programs that are responsible for preparing student teachers with adequate English proficiency and teaching skills. TPD² is one of the programs planned to overcome the above problems. Professional development can be defined as activities undertaken by teachers, in a continuous way, to improve their quality (Brown, 2001; Campbell, McNamara & Gilroy, 2004; Harmer, 2007; Craft, 2000; Day & Sachs, 2004; Diaz-

¹ English as a Foreign Language

² Teacher Professional Development



Maggioli, 2004, as cited in Creemers, Kyriakides, & Antoniou, 2013; Guskey, 2000; Rhodes, Stokes, & Hampton, 2004). In addition to that, there are teacher activities related to professional development, including such as: seminars, courses/ workshops, peer observation, peer coaching, team teaching, action research, etc. Recent studies have successfully identified different reasons why teachers chose to participate in training courses (Kao, Wu, & Tsai, 2011; Rzejak et al., 2014). These works have clearly stated that the reasons for engaging³ in PD can be measured reliably and validly with standardized survey instruments.

In line with this, there are a lot of studies concerning TPD. Some of them, focus on the teacher professional development has been reported to be beneficial, both in ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context (see Bell & Gilbert, 1994; Bell & Mladenovic, 2008; Christodoulou, 2010; Dasrizal, 2009; Drew & Klopper, 2014; Karaaslan, 2003; Lan & Wang, 2013; Maisa, 2009; Mardiana, 2013; Pajarwaty, 2009; Sadler, 2012; Subramanian & Genni, 2013; Thongthai, 2011; Warahmah, 2009; Yani, 2012; Zepke & Stevens, 1987). Another study concerning EFL teachers' views on professional development, the models of teacher development they are familiar with, and their experiences in the area (Agbayahoun, 2016). The results indicate that though the EFL teachers often have the opportunity to participate in teacher development activities, these activities do not enable them to develop the skill of reflection and action on practice as they are patterned on top-down models of teacher development and happen in a one-shot workshopstyle. In addition, according Richards & Farell (2005), define inquiry-based professional development as the teacher's ongoing reflection and action on his teaching with the view to finding solutions to practical problems or issues that puzzle him about his teaching through actionresearch or classroom research in order to improve and/or renew his knowledge and professional skills. However, Hill, Beisiegel, and Jacob (2013) provided evidence based results to show that professional development is significantly linked to student achievement. These findings and similar reported evidences point at the impact of developing teachers' competencies (Meissel, Parr, & Timperley, 2016).

In regard with the related studies above, this study focused on the personal development of the teachers, which professions they undertook and how those activities helped them to support their practice teaching. Additionally, this study also focused on challenges faced by EFL teachers' senior high school in contribution to their professional development.

Teaching Professional Development

The word "teacher professional development" and the interpretation used in this study have several implications. First, etymologically, the system is a group of agents working together (interacting) as a unit for a specific purpose. Agents may be factors or actors that are part of the system and whose properties contribute to the system as a whole. Interaction implies a shared, cooperative interaction between the agents; they have an effect on each other. Second, the term "teacher" is used to indicate the reference to the system and refers to in-service teachers who have completed their initial training or preparation. The word "growth" is preferred over "learning" because growth has a wider sense and can represent the teacher learning and change's multiple dimensions, consequences, and intentions.

³ We use the terms participation in professional development (PD), engagement in PD, attendance in PD and uptake of PD interchangeably. The terms indicate that individuals take part in PD activities.



Evans (2002), views, TPD, or ‘teacher development’, as “the process whereby teachers’ professionalism and/or professionalism may be considered to be enhanced” (p.131). The challenge, according to this viewpoint, is to discover methods that work best to improve the knowledge and skills of the teachers. In addition, Guskey (2000) defined TPD as “processes and activities aimed at enhancing educators’ professional knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to improve student learning in return” (p. 16).

Theoretically, TPD’s activities and processes depend on each other and, in most cases, a specific TPD activity informs the process it entails, and vice versa. For example, action research as a TPD activity involves a constructive process whereby teachers examine their practices and construct new understandings or knowledge in order to improve them. This perspective is evident among the scholars who propose a set of “effective” features of TPD (e.g. Desimone et al., 2002; Knapp, 2003).

On the basis of the Standard Academic Qualification and Teacher Competence⁴, there are four competencies that teachers must have to become professional teachers, as follows: pedagogic competence, personal competence, social competence, and professional competence.

Law of Teacher and Lecturer (UU Guru dan Dosen – UUGD 2005)

The Indonesian Government has made a variety of attempts to improve the quality of teachers. In 2005, the Government introduced Law No. 14 on Teachers and Teachers, known as *Undang-Undang Guru and Dosen (UUGD 2005)*, aimed at alleviating issues that are necessary for teaching in schools. Indonesia established National Professional Standards for Teachers in 2005 which underscore the importance of the quality of teacher education and the professional development of teachers (Umaedi, 2005).

Research Context: TPD Learning Activities

In the sense of English Language Teaching (ELT), a number of scholars (Chan, 2011; Karimi, 2011; Kasi, 2011; Lee, 2011; Meng & Tajaroensuk, 2013; Wati, 2011) have investigated various programs related to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher professional development. They looked at many successful approaches to teacher participation in PD systems such as conferences, pre-service teacher systems, teacher preparation programs, workshops and other related events. Their results indicate that teachers, as educators, need to stay up-to-date and at least preserve their professionalism in reacting to new educational paradigms and developments. In addition, teaching practices aimed at facilitating creative educational outcomes (21st century skills) can be differentiated from creative teaching practices (TALIS⁵, 2018). With regard to types of professional development, TALIS (2013) included nine different options in its survey: courses/workshops, educational conferences or seminars, certification programme, observation visits to other schools, involvement in a network of teachers, individual or joint research on the subject, and mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching. These and other forms are also discussed in other studies (i.e. Burman et al., 2000; Erickson, Noonan, Brussow, & Carter, 2016).

In order to gather information on the teachers’ experiences of EFL teachers with professional development, a questionnaire item asked about the activities they had

⁴ Permendiknas Nomor 16 Tahun 2007

⁵ The Teaching and Learning International Survey



engaged in during the year prior to the study and offered the following collection of response options to choose from: state-run annual training workshops, TEFL⁶ degree courses, compulsory weekly schoolbased teacher development seminars, conferences, peer observation, teacher networking, classroom study, portfolio building, coaching / mentoring, and professional learning communities.

Table 2.1. Participation in professional development activities

Professional development model	Professional development activities
Top-down (knowledge transmission model)	State organized training seminars TEFL degree courses
Bottomup (knowledge construction model)	School-based teacher development Workshops Conferences Peer Observation Coaching monitoring Action-research Portfolio construction Teacher networking Involvement in professional learning Communities

In the table above described that there are two categories of professional development supplied by Agbayahoun (2016), additionally, based on theory, “analysis distinguishes between top-down and bottom-up teacher development models” (Johnson, 2006;

Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Richards, 2008; Richards & Farrell, 2005, Roux & Mendoza Valladares, 2014), i.e. (a) according to the professional development model, there are two types of models, namely: top-down and bottom-up, which describe the model of the procedure; and (b) professional development activities, which define the day-to-day activities of the teacher.

In view of the variety of needs of teachers, a differentiated approach to professional development is needed. A number of school districts involve teachers in the professional development strategies listed below to meet the varied needs, skills and knowledge of teachers. Centered on the theory of Diaz-Maggioli (2003); Richards, J. C., & Farrell, T. S.

⁶ Teacher English as a Foreign Language



C. (2005), some professional development practices are explained as follows: workshop, self-monitoring or self-observation, peer observation, peer coaching, study groups, team teaching, dialog journals or keeping a teaching journal, professional development portfolios, mentoring, analyzing critical incident, case analysis, participatory practitioner research.

In documents or portfolio assessment, a participating teacher submits a portfolio consisting of documents that serve as evidence of his or her fulfillment of the four competencies, i.e. pedagogic, personal, social, and professional competencies. Ten criteria are used to assess the documents included in the portfolios. Each portfolio submitted must fulfil a relevant criterion of Standards of Academic Qualifications and Competence of Teachers. The 10 criteria are as follows:

1. Academic qualifications.
2. Education and training.
3. Teaching experience.
4. Lesson planning and execution.
5. Principals' or superintendents' appraisal.
6. Academic achievements.
7. Professional development artefacts.
8. Participation in professional forums.
9. Experience in social and educational organisations.
10. Teaching or education-related awards of achievements.

(MNERI, 2009d, p. 3)

Teacher Professional Development in Indonesia

In Indonesia, as a nonspeaking country, the context of English is foreign language. International language proficiency issues have gained considerable attention in Asia, Southeast Asian countries and/or in a more global sense (Purwadi & Muljoatmodjo, 2000; Lengkanawati, 2005; Lie, 2007; Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006; Bjork's, 2003; Sari, 2012; Widiati & Hayati, 2015; Widodo & Riandi, 2013; Thair and Treagust's, 2003). In the Indonesian context, studies have been conducted to investigate the practice of TPD among teachers in Indonesia (Sari, 2012; Widiati & Hayati, 2015; Widodo & Riandi, 2013).

Type of Professional Development in Indonesia

In the latest reform, the Ministry of National Education of the Government of Indonesia is working to promote efforts to improve the quality of teachers through the Sustainable Teacher Professional Development Program (TPDP). There are three main types of professional development of English teachers in Indonesia (Fitriah, 2005), such as: Teacher Competence Test (*Uji Kompetensi Guru - UKG*), School-Cluster Subject Teacher Working Group (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran - MGMP*), Education and Training for the Teaching Profession (*Pendidikan dan Latihan Profesi Guru - PLPG*).

Challenges of Professional Development in Indonesia.

The problems faced years ago in the choice of approaches, the qualifications of teachers and the design of materials still seem to be present today. In addition, Wati (2011) claimed that, in challenging of getting students to have an international level of



English proficiency, teachers must be prepared to accept and adapt themselves to the many kinds of changes that are taking place around them. Teachers are asked to change their role as cultural distributors for long-term learning (continuous learners) to students. In addition, teacher preparation programs and the professional advancement of teachers must also be modified. Time, money and sources must be concerned with teaching and learning needs as adult learners. In view of the complex role of teachers in modern schools, teachers should be trained, faced with new challenges and tasks for the full implementation of classroom responsibilities (V. Zuljan & Vogrinc, 2011, p. 7). Teachers should also be able to boost the level of selfreliance in order to solve their current issues, both personally and collectively.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative research in form of a case study was employed. The research was conducted in three of senior high school in Garut, West Java, Indonesia. By purposeful sampling, the participants involved in this research were three English teachers, which consisted of 1 teacher of male and 2 teachers of female. The age of the participants was about 41 until 56 years old. Also, the participants were an experienced teacher in three of senior high schools in Garut.

The data were collected using a semi-structured interview, additionally, document analysis as validate the data. The items were designed based on reviews of literature on self-focused and/or personal based EFL teachers' professional development (Richards and Farrell, 2005). The questions generally covered the following points; Professional development activities undertaken by the teachers and professional development challenges faced by the teachers. As evidence, document analysis data as teachers' portfolio has been taken from criterion of Standards of Academic Qualifications and Competence of Teachers by MNERI, 2009d, p. 3.

The data were then analyzed based on the theory from Cresswell (2012), such as: prepare and organize the data, explore the data, labelling, re-reads and collecting the data, represent and report the findings, interpret the findings, and validate the accuracy of the findings.

The author analyzes the data by comparing idioms in the source text and the translation results in the target text using Newmark theory, to find out the translation procedures used. The research steps are: The author reads the novel *Rumah Kaca*. Looking for words in the form of idioms in the novel, and collected. Then the author read the novel *Haus auf Glass*, looked for and collected translations of Indonesian idiom. After all the idiom data has been collected, both Indonesian idioms and translations are in German, then the author analyzed the data.

FINDINGS

Below is the result of document analysis, this data has been taken from the academic qualification of teachers.

Table 4.1. The fulfillment of teachers' portfolio to efforts in developing their professionalism

NO.	CRITERIA DOCUMENT	OF TEACHER		
		1	2	3



1.	Academic qualifications	√	√	√
2.	Education and training	√	√	√
3.	Teaching experience	√	√	√
4.	Lesson planning and execution	-	√	√
5.	Principal's or superintendent's appraisal	√	-	√
6.	Academic achievements	-	√	√
7.	Professional development artefacts	-	√	√
8.	Participation in professional forums	-	-	-
9.	Experience in social and educational organisations	√	√	√
10.	Teaching or education-related awards of achievements	√	-	-

Based on the table, it can be concluded that all the participants met the academic qualifications, only a few were not fulfilled on the grounds that they did not participate in or take part in these activities but their certificates were not given or lost. But, from some of the assessment activities above, it turns out that in the assessment of participation in professional forums, all teachers cannot participate in it. Besides that, in this research has revealed several points related teachers' knowledge, teachers' experience, and teachers' view based on result of interview, as presented below:

DISCUSSIONS

Teachers' Knowledge

Teachers' knowledge of Teacher Professional Development can be said to provide a good understanding of the meaning, the examples of such programs, how to develop professionalism, the programs available, the advantages and the programs that can help them. Not only that, they also know the laws that apply in Indonesia, the general rules for teachers that must be followed. It is keeping with Umaedi (2005) stated that, Indonesia established National Professional Standards for Teachers in 2005, underlining the importance of the quality of teacher education and the professional development of



teachers.



Teachers' Experience

Meanwhile, based on their experience, it can be seen that they are not left behind in participating in various TPD activities and can be proven by the findings of the analysis documents that have been researched. Like EN170920 explained that development activities can be taken by teacher forum like *MGMP*. Reviewing her answered, the models of PD activities carried out by research subjects involving the teaching community, such as attending the teacher association forum and having discussions with colleagues at the same school, as in line with Garet, Porter, Desimone et al. (2001), Datnow et al. (2002), Lay (2010) and Hismanoglu (2010) who say that having such kind of study group for teachers (either formally or informally) is extremely helpful to them, because this type of PD activity can be more responsive and have a practical effect on teaching practice. Besides addition, the discussion section, which provided opportunities for other *MGMP* members and their colleagues to take up and make meaningful suggestions at the same school, confirmed the idea that the involvement of colleagues as one of the sources in providing meaningful feedback on classroom practices is also one of the contributing elements to the teachers' professional development (Vo & Nguyen, 2010). They also apply the outcomes of their experience during the TPD in the classroom and are adapted to the needs of students and existing facilities. Then, referring to what they said, TPD has an indirect impact on the teaching of teachers so that they can change the old model to a new one. It is line with Asu (2004, cited in Rahman, et al, 2011), there are a variety of outcomes that are potentially affected by the teacher training programme. These include: (i) teacher knowledge; (ii) teacher beliefs and attitudes; (iii) teaching and learning processes; (iv) schoollevel practice; and (v) student achievement. Although, they often encounter a variety of challenges to engaging in these activities, such as; school support, available time, student backgrounds, and the problems of the teacher themselves. But this is looking for a solution, and they can solve it. This finding of support from Astri, O.K. & Basikin (2019) found that there were at least four challenges facing English teachers in Indonesia. The four main challenges include extrinsic motivation, lack of institutional support, a gap between the needs of teachers and the program, and lack of a sense of autonomy.

Teachers' View

Additionally, from the teachers' perspective, almost all of their answers stated that the PD program was effective and important for teachers and schools to follow, which would have an impact on the standard of the school itself. According to research findings at the selected research site, teachers should make an effort to achieve efficient and effective TPD from two perspectives: moral and practical teaching practices (Babbage, 2007). They can also figure out the implementation of teaching methods from the results of participating in the PD program, which can be seen from the academic achievement of the student or the behavior and skill of the teacher themselves. For the benefit of the PD itself, various kinds of supportive responses to the needs of the class and the more developed skills of the teachers have been mentioned. They also provided positive responses to these programs, saying that these programs could help them develop their skills. It is line with Yoon et al. (2007) only lengthy, intensive career development programs have an impact on teaching practices and student achievement. In this case, positive suggestions are made. Additionally, several studies have been performed and have shown that TPD is important because of its positive effects in many ways (Hoffman & Harris, 2015). Professional learning also benefits individuals, institutions and organizations, education networks and



programs (Mulvey, 2013).

Nowadays, in building up such professionals, teachers and developers need to be able to predict unexpected circumstances such as the Covid-19 pandemic, because of this pandemic, teachers need to master technology in order to build a skilled and quality learning system. Teachers must build an attractive teaching method for conveying materials through online applications, in the form of zoom, whatsapp, and other applications. Not a few of the teachers, too, have recently been slowed in teaching and training by limitations in technology, time and other obstacles. Developers should also be able to design and plan a simple curriculum that is in line with current conditions, which is useful for helping teachers to explain teaching well and for students to understand. In fact, students are often less able to understand the material provided by the teacher because the teaching methods are not in accordance with the needs, the uncontrolled tasks given by the teacher and the limitations of technology are very significant obstacles. This result, the students not being able to fully comprehend the teaching material presented. It is also hoped that there will be a solution to this issue from the stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

The result show that they had positive perceptions of the TPD. Generally, TPD was perceived positively by all the teachers. It was seen from an explanation of teachers' knowledge, teachers' experience, teachers' view that have been applied towards teaching and learning practices in the classroom, e.g. in *MGMP* activities, offers teachers new methods of teaching.

Following three previous explanations, they also had problem improving their professional skills, because the challenges they faced are not only from external one, but also from internal factor.

In addition, all participants have made similar efforts to improve their professionalism. These efforts comply with the Academic Qualifications and Teachers' Competence Standards, and include programs such as seminars, workshops, training programs, and even modules / books, classroom action research and teaching materials.

On the basis of the findings of the document analysis, almost all the participants had problems with the certificate of the activity. For example, they participated in these activities, but the certificate was not given by the government or their certificate was lost. As a result, they could not attach much evidence to joining the PD program.

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